

THE
P R O L O G U E
To the *CITY HEIRESS*,
Or, Sir *TIMOTHY TREATALL*.

15 May. 1682

Written by Tho. Otway. Spoken by Mrs. Barry.

HOW vain have prov'd the Labours of the Stage,
 In striving to reclaim a vitious Age!
 Poets may write the mischief to impeach,
 You care as little what the Poets teach,
 As you regard at Church what Parsons preach. }
 But where such Follies and such vices reign,
 What honest Pen has patience to refrain?
 At Church, in Pews, ye most devoutly snore,
 And here, got dully drunk, ye come to roar;
 Ye go to Church to gloat, and Ogle there,
 And come to meet more lewd convenient here:
 With equal zeal ye honour either place
 And run so very evenly your Race, }
 Y'improve in Wit just as you do in Grace.
 It must be so, some Dæmon has possess'd
 Our Land, and we have never since been blest.
 Y'have seen it all, or heard of its Renown, }
 In a reverend shape it stalk'd about the Town,
 Six Yeomen tall attending on its frown. } *Dr Cibus Oakley.*
 Sometimes with humble note and zealous lore,
 'Twou'd play the apostolick function o'er. }
 But, Heav'n have mercy on us when it swore.
 When e'er it swore, to prove the Oaths were true,
 Out of its mouth at Random Halts flew
 Round some unwary neck, by Magick thrown,
 Though still the cunning Devil sav'd its own;
 For when the Inchantment could no longer last,
 The subtile Pug, most dexterously uncast,
 Left awfull form for one more seeming pious, }
 And in a moment vary'd to defy us:
 From silken Doctor, home-spun *Ananias* }
 Left the lewd Court, and did in City fix, }
 Where still by its old arts it plays new tricks,
 And fills the heads of Fools with Politicks. }
 This Dæmon lately drew in many a guest,
 To part with zealous Guinny for ——— no feast.
 Who, but the most incorrigible Fops,
 For ever doom'd in dismal Cells, call'd Shops,
 To cheat and damn themselves to get their livings,
 Wou'd lay sweet Money out in Sham-Tanksgivings?
 Sham-Plots you may have paid for o'er and o'er;
 But who e'er paid for a Sham-Treat before?
 Had you not better sent your Offerings all,
 Hither to us, than Sequestrators hall?
 I being your Steward, Justice had been done ye;
 I cou'd have entertain'd you worth your Money.

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EPILOGUE.

Written by a Person of Quality. Spoken by Mrs. Butler.

MY Part, I fear, will take with but a few,
A Rich young Heiress to her first Love true!
'Tis damn'd unnatural, and past enduring,
Against the fundamental Laws of Whoring.
Marrying's the Mask, which Modesty assures,
Helps to get new, and covers old Amours;
And Husband sounds so dull to a Town Bride,
You now a-days condemn him e'r he's try'd;
E'r in his office he's confirm'd Possessor,
Like Trincaloes you choose him a Successor,
In the gay spring of Love, when free from doubts,
With early shoots his Velvet Forehead sprouts.
Like a poor Parson bound to hard Indentures,
You make him pay his First-fruits e'r he enters.
But for short Carnivals of stoln good Cheer,
You're after forc'd to keep Lent all the Year;
Till brought at last to a starving Nun's condition,
You break into our Quarters for Provision:
Invade Fop-Corner with your glaring Beauties,
And tice our Loyal Subjects from their Duties.
Pray, Ladies, Leave that Province to our care,
A Fool is the Fee-simple of a Player,
In which we Women claim a double share. }
In other things the Men are Rulers made;
But catching Woodcocks is our proper Trade.
If by Stage-Fops they a poor Living get, }
We can grow rich, thanks to our Mother Wit,
By the more natural Block-heads in the Pit. }
Take then the Wits, and all their useles Prattles.
But as for Fools, they are our Goods and Chattels,
Return, Ingrates, to your first Haunt the Stage,
We've taught your Youth, and help'd your feeble Age.
What is't you see in Quality we want, }
What can they give you which we cannot grant? }
We have their pride, their Frolicks and their paint. }
We feel the same Youth dancing in our Blood;
Our dress as gay—All underneath as good.
Most men have found us, hitherto more true, }
And, if we're not abus'd by some of you, }
We're full as fair—perhaps as wholesome too. }
But if at best our hopefull Sport and Trade is,
And nothing now will serve you but great Ladies;
May question'd Marriages your Fortune be,
And Lawyers drain your Pockets more than we:
May Judges puzzle a clear Case with Laws,
And Musquetoons at last decide the Cause.

F I N I S.